

REP. JOHNSON OPPOSES CAP-AND-TRADE LEGISLATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. (June 26, 2009) – U.S. Rep. Timothy V. Johnson issued the following statement today after voting against H.R. 2454, the national energy tax law promoted by Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

“This is a national energy tax on the American people. Middle America and rural America are especially endangered by this legislation that, like so many other pieces of legislation rammed through by leadership, has been sent to us with little or no opportunity for debate and amendment.

“While our economy is being shredded to pieces, Democrats suspended business Thursday night to attend a luau at the White House. During the party, sponsors were drafting a bill of over 1,200 pages that no Republican had seen and no one was allowed to amend or question.

“From what analysis we do have, it is clear that in this time of economic recession, this bill amounts to potential economic chaos. The President himself has said that utility rates will ‘necessarily skyrocket.’ We may be facing the loss of up to 2.7 million jobs over the next 20 years because of stringent new industry requirements. Industry will move overseas and take their jobs with them. Higher gas and energy prices will hit us all.”

A Heritage Foundation analysis of the impact of the Waxman-Markey bill on a Congressional district-by-district basis shows that in Rep. Johnson’s 15th Congressional, the loss in gross state product would be \$437.67 million in 2012. Personal income loss in the 15th would be \$611.55 million. The analysis was made using the Global Insight U.S. Macroeconomic Model.

Rep. Johnson continued:

“As a member of the Agriculture Committee and a native of Central Illinois, some of my greatest fears in this legislation are for the farmers and people in rural America. More than 100 agriculture associations are against this bill. Agriculture is a high cost, energy intensive business and farmers are afraid for their livelihoods, and for America’s competitiveness.

“For more than six years, we have been working to bring FutureGen to Mattoon, Illinois. It just received a jump-start and we are six-to-eight months away from a possible launch. I could not in good conscience jeopardize FutureGen’s chances by voting on an \$800 billion bill that could adversely affect this important project.

“I have been an environmental advocate on many fronts for many years, from pushing higher fuel efficiency standards to better stewardship of our land. I know there are better ways and better science to use in accomplishing our goals of cleaner air and energy independence. With so many questions and such broad opposition, I firmly believe we should take a step back and consider these laws with diplomacy and judiciousness that American people have every right to expect. The consequences of not doing so are grave.

“There is presently an alternative to the cap-and-trade legislation called the Forbes Amendment, modeled after the Manhattan Project, which deserves serious consideration. The concept is intended to unleash the scientific community in a competition that will lead us to the goal of 100 percent energy independence within 20 years.

“I know that within the University of Illinois and Illinois State University the advances already made in the fields of physics, in energy science, in biofuels and other applicable areas. We should allow science and logic to drive this legislation, not politics.”

H.R. 513, the New Manhattan Project for Energy Independence, would bring together scientists and researchers in a unified national challenge to bring us to the goal of energy independence. Under the Project, significant prizes would be awarded to the first group, school, team or company that reaches each of seven energy goals.

The goals include doubling car fuel efficiency to 70 mpg, safe storage or neutralization of nuclear waste, making solar power as cheap as coal, safely storing carbon emission from coal plants.

“There are better ways to accomplish our national goal of energy efficiency and independence than taxing us all more,” Rep. Johnson said.